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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/779,960	02/17/2004	Michael E. LaSalle	STG-001	9118

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GORDON & JACOBSON, P.C.
60 LONG RIDGE ROAD
SUITE 407
STAMFORD, CT 06902

EXAMINER

HARMON, CHRISTOPHER R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3721

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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07/16/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/779,960

Applicant(s)

LASALLE, MICHAEL E.

Examiner

Christopher R. Harmon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3-29,36 and 37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 3-29,36 and 37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 3-4, 10, 12, 15-17, 23, 25, 28 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pagdin (US 2,920,916) in view of Seaberg (US 6,135,704).

Pagdin disclose a method of handling material comprising automatically arranging bags into groups by a conveyor 10 system to an accumulator station 12; lifting and transporting groups into a cross stacked configuration via suction/stacker head 19; see figures 1 and 3, column 2, line 21. Bags of material are inherently packaged at an upstream point in the process. Suction head 19 automatically lifts and transports arranged groups of elongate bags by applying opposing clamping forces by outer portion of member 50 along outer sides of bags while preventing bag slippage by inner portion of member 50; see column 3, lines 45+. The multi-row stack is thereby palletized and lifted for transport to a customer. The bottom group/tier of units 12' is also cross stacked, see figure 1.

The lifting and transporting device of Pagdin uses suction on the top surface of the arranged bags therefore does not directly disclose applying opposed clamping forces

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that alone are sufficient to lift the group, however Seaberg discloses a similar lifting device for lifting a layer of cross stacked products using opposing clamping forces that alone are sufficient to lift the stacked layer; see figures 1 and 3.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the clamp device of Seaberg in the invention to Pagdin as a substitute for the lifting/clamping device for transferring articles.

Regarding claim 12, Seaberg describes using a central core support structure (considered to fit into a slot in a conveyor belt system) operable disposed between cross stacked products for preventing sliding; see column 5, lines 54+.

3. Claims 5-9, 13-14, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pagdin (US 2,920,916) in view of) in view of Seaberg (US 6,135,704) and Applicants Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

Pagdin (see above) do not directly disclose thermal insulation, polymer bags about 38/21/8.5 inches, glass fiber, however applicant admits these items to be well known in the prior art; see page 7, paragraph 2. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use these dimensioned products in the method taught by Pagdin for transport/shipping.

Regarding claims 7 and 20, the method of packaging cellulose material into elongated bags is well known in the art and would have been obvious to one skilled in the art for the known benefits of the modification.

4. Claims 13-14 and 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pagdin (US 2,920,916) in view of Seaberg (US 6,135,704) and AAPA and further view of Milholen et al. (US 3,992,049).

Pagdin does not directly disclose the automatic lifting device comprising at least one support structure disposed between bags received in a slot of a conveyor system however Milholen et al. disclose a lifting device 10 with central bar support structures 106, 108, 110, and 112 which are disposed between layered products for support in lifting/transport; see figure 3. Central bar supports enter into/out of slots in tray 220 during the operation, which is considered part of a conveyor belt system; see figure 2.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teachings of Milholen et al. in the modified invention to Pagdin for keeping separate the bags during their transport.

Regarding claims 13-14 and 26-27, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include chain, rope, or wire in the support structure for operably separating the products.

5. Claims 11 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pagdin (US 2,920,916), and further in view of Kintgen et al. (US 4,271,755).

The cross stacking pattern is not specifically disclosed in Pagdin however Kintgen et al. describe a similar method including cross stacking three bags; two adjacent to each other; see figure 4 and column 3, lines 50-56. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include

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the cross stacking pattern as taught by Kintgen et al. in the invention to Pagdin to securely transport the stacked bags.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to all claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

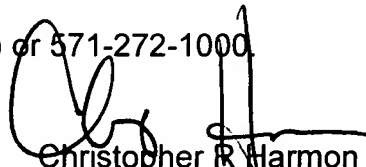
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher R. Harmon whose telephone number is (571) 272-4461. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi Rada can be reached on (571) 272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Christopher R. Harmon
Primary Examiner
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